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FM THE SITUATION ROOM//TOHAK 15//
TO GOMPERT/BREMER FOR THE SECRETARY
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UNCLAS VIA BLACK PATCH WH42888

TOHAK 15

034A
SALT 10-23
WITH KISSINGER

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- TOP DEFENSE OFFICIALS DO NOT BELIEVE THE SOVIET UNION IS SERIOUSLY NEGOTIATING THE SALT TALKS BECAUSE THEY SUSPECT THE RUSSIANS ARE FEELING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE OPENING MONTHS OF GERALD FORD'S PRESIDENCY.

TALKS REOPENED SEPT. 18 IN GENEVA IN AN EFFORT TO REACH A NEW STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TREATY TO SUCCEED THE FIVE-YEAR INTERIM AGREEMENT SIGNED IN 1972.

AN ATTEMPT TO GET THE TALKS MOVING AGAIN WAS ONE OF SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER'S GOALS IN MOSCOW.

PENTAGON SOURCES SAID TODAY THAT NOTHING HAD HAPPENED SO FAR AT GENEVA AND THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE BEING SUPER-CAUTIOUS.

THEY SAID THE TOP PENTAGON OFFICIALS BELIEVED THE RUSSIANS WERE UNSURE OF WHAT NEW DIRECTIONS THE FORD ADMINISTRATION WOULD TAKE AND WANTED TO "FEEL THEIR WAY AND TEST THE WATERS" VERY SLOWLY.

BUT THE SOURCES ALSO SAID THE TOP DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SERIOUSLY DOUBT THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE A REAL COMMITMENT TO ARMS CONTROL.

THE SOURCES SAID TOP STRATEGY SESSIONS WERE STUDED WITH COMMENTS THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE "UNSOPHISTICATED" IN THEIR CONCEPTS OF NUCLEAR STRATEGY AND THEY REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE THAT ARMS CONTROL WAS TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH SUPERPOWERS.

BUT THE SOURCES SAID DESPITE THAT, THE RUSSIANS ACKNOWLEDGE THEY ARE BEHIND IN THE ARMS RACE.

MEANWHILE, THE PENTAGON ANNOUNCED WEDNESDAY THAT THE RUSSIANS TEST-FIRED ANOTHER INTERCONTINENTAL MISSILE 5,700 MILES FROM CENTRAL RUSSIA TO THE MID-PACIFIC TUESDAY NIGHT.

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IT WAS THE SECOND TEST SHOT THIS WEEK, PART OF A CONTINUING
SERIES OF TESTS OF FOUR NEW MISSILES, SOME OF WHICH ARE EXPECTED
TO BE DEPLOYED BY EARLY NEXT YEAR.

UPI 10-24 02:28 AED

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